

REMARKS

Claims 1-9, 11-12, 17-36 and 41-47 are pending in the present application. By this Reply, claim 10 and non-elected claims 13-16 and 37-40 have been canceled and new claims 41-47 directed to the elected invention are added. Claims 1, 8, 17, 29, 41 and 44 are independent claims.

Withdrawal of the Non-Elected Claims

On page 1 of the Office Action dated May 27, 2005, the Examiner has indicated that claims 13-16, 30 and 37 are withdrawn from consideration. Applicants treat this as a typographical error since claims 17-36 are properly indicated as allowed, and assume that non-elected claims 13-16 and 37-40 instead are withdrawn from consideration for the purposes of preparing the present Reply.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants acknowledge the Examiner's indication that claims 1-7 and 17-36 are allowed over the prior art of record.

Applicants further acknowledge the Examiner's indication that claim 10 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

To expedite prosecution only, independent claim 8 has been amended to include allowable claim 10. Thus, indication of allowance of claim 8 and its dependent claims 9, 11-12 and 47 is deemed proper and respectfully requested.

35 U.S.C. § 102 & § 103 Rejections

Claim 8 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by Tomita (U.S. Patent No. 6,630,840). Claim 9 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tomita in view of Suzuki et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,377,030). Claim 11 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tomita in view of Hayashi (U.S. Patent No. 5,657,139). Claim 12 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tomita in view of Fujikawa et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,909,264). These rejections, insofar as they pertain to the presently pending claims, are respectfully traversed.

As discussed above, independent claim 8 has been amended to incorporate allowable claim 10 only to expedite prosecution and without acquiescing to any of the Examiner's allegations made to reject claims 8-9 and 11-12. Thus, claim 8 and its dependent claims (due to their dependency) are patentable over the applied reference(s), and the rejections are improper and should be withdrawn.

New Claims

New claims 41-46 emphasize similar or other distinguishing features of the present invention over the prior art of record. For instance, the first inspection line to which a gate-off voltage lower than a threshold voltage of the first transistor is applied, and the second inspection line to which a gate-on voltage higher than a threshold voltage of the second transistor is applied, as recited in independent claims 41 and 44, are not taught or suggested by the prior art of record including Tomita. Claim 47 is believed to be allowable as being dependent on now allowable claim 8. Thus, early indication of allowance of the new claims is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

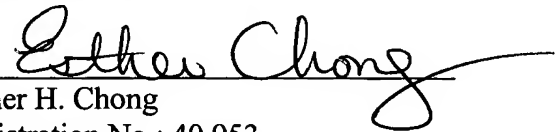
For the foregoing reasons and in view of the above clarifying amendments, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw all of the objections and rejections of record, and to provide an early issuance of a Notice of Allowance.

Should there be any outstanding matters which need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Esther H. Chong (Registration No. 40,953) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and further replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

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